



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Eastern District of New York*

RCH:DR/RMS
F. #2020R00964

*271 Cadman Plaza East
Brooklyn, New York 11201*

November 6, 2023

By ECF

The Honorable Brian M. Cogan
United States District Judge
United States District Court
Eastern District of New York
225 Cadman Plaza East
Brooklyn, New York 11201

Re: United States v. Brandon Belmonte
Criminal Docket No. 23-313 (BMC)

Dear Counsel:


The government respectfully submits this letter to advise the Court and Pretrial Services it has received information that the defendant Brandon Belmonte recently contacted a victim in the above-captioned case, in violation of his bond conditions.

On August 1, 2023, a federal grand jury sitting in this District returned a two-count indictment (the “Indictment”) charging the defendant with conspiracy to commit bank fraud and wire fraud (the “Vehicle Financing Scheme”) and conspiracy to commit wire fraud. See ECF No. 1. As alleged in the Indictment, as part of the Vehicle Financing Scheme, the defendant acquired luxury vehicles for his company’s rental fleet primarily by purchasing and leasing such luxury vehicles in the names of other individuals (the “Straw Buyers”). Id. ¶ 7. The defendant and the Straw Buyers obtained financing to purchase or lease luxury vehicles from financial institutions and financial lending companies (collectively, the “Victims”) pursuant to financing agreements. Id. ¶ 8. In addition to falsely representing to the Victims that the purchased vehicles would not be used as rental vehicles, the defendant submitted false information and fraudulent records to the Victims about the Straw Buyers’ income and financial ability to repay loans to ensure that the Victims agreed to provide the requested financing. Id. ¶¶ 9–10.

On August 4, 2023, the defendant was arrested pursuant to an arrest warrant issued in connection with the Indictment. See ECF No. 2. That day, the defendant appeared before the Honorable Vera M. Scanlon, United States Magistrate Judge, see ECF No. 4, and was released on a \$100,000 bond, with several specified conditions of bail, see ECF No. 6. As relevant here, the defendant was ordered “not [to] have any with contact . . . victims/witness,” id. ¶ 7(e), which the government made clear includes financial institutions and companies that the defendant is charged with defrauding.

Given his direct involvement in previously obtaining lease financing from Company A, the defendant is well aware that Company A is one of the Victims of the Vehicle Financing Scheme. Moreover, on October 23, 2023, pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 16, the government produced to the defendant records from Company A, thereby leaving no doubt as to status of Company A in this case.

On October 30, 2023, Company A informed the government that one of its employees had been contacted by the defendant. Specifically, on October 28, 2023—just five days after the defendant was provided with the discovery materials regarding Company A—an employee of Company A received the below messages from a telephone number (the “Subject Telephone”). Based on records obtained from the service provider, the government has confirmed that the Subject Telephone belongs to the defendant.

Subject Telephone
Imagine I have a car with Company A
How crazy is that
And you guys didn't even catch it


These messages from the Subject Telephone to the employee of Company A are clearly taunting in nature. For context, as a result of the conduct underlying the Vehicle Financing Scheme, Company A has prohibited the defendant and any of his associates from obtain financing through Company A.

Given the above, it appears that the defendant knowingly contacted one of the Victims, in violation of the terms of his pre-trial release. The government is not seeking bond revocation at this time, but it does request that the defendant be admonished at the next appearance, which is scheduled for January 23, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

BREON PEACE
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cc: Clerk of the Court (BMC) (by ECF)
Counsel of Record (by ECF)
Pretrial Services (by email)